

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, and 4 are pending in the application, with Claim 1 being independent.

Claims 1, 3, and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by EP 1 083 613 (“Okada”), which was published March 14, 2001.

Applicants submit herewith a sworn English translation of the foreign priority document for the present application, namely, Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-106380, which was filed April 7, 2000. Applicants submit that JP ‘380 supports the claims pending in the application.


A claim to priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 was submitted on July 6, 2001, together with a certified copy of the priority document. It is respectfully submitted that filing the sworn translation of JP ‘380 perfects the claim to priority.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Okada has been removed as prior art with respect to the present application. Withdrawal of the § 102 rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the application are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in Washington, D.C. by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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Attachment: Sworn English Translation
of priority document 2000-106380

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